

Application No. 10/608,430  
Reply dated January 17, 2006  
Response to Office Action dated August 15, 2005

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A filter element for filtering a gas stream, comprising a plurality of filter mats at least one filter mat positioned in the gas stream to which particles in the gas stream can adhere and be removed from the gas stream, wherein the plurality of filter mats comprise at least one filter mat comprises a plurality of layers of a filter material and a membrane disposed between the layers, wherein the filter mats on both sides of the membrane each comprise up to 20 single layers of glass fiber paper or plastic fiber fleece or felt, the filter mats each being provided additionally on an upstream side with a preliminary nonwoven web and on a downstream side with a post-separating nonwoven web, and wherein the filter mats are held hollow-cylindrically on a perforated central tube, so that the gas stream to be filtered flows in radially from the outside and can be carried axially out of the filter element.

2-7. (cancelled)

8. (original) A filter element according to claim 1, wherein the filter element is used for de-oiling an airstream in a compressor or a vacuum pump.

9. (original) A filter element according to claim 1, wherein the membrane is a highly porous polymer membrane having a porosity greater than 60% and a pore size between 0.1  $\mu\text{m}$  and 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

10. (original) A filter element according to claim 1, wherein the membrane has a symmetrical or asymmetrical structure.

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11. (original) A filter element according to claim 1, wherein the membrane has a thickness in the range of 25  $\mu\text{m}$  to 250  $\mu\text{m}$ .

12. (previously presented) A filter element according to claim 1, wherein the membrane is made from one or more of polysulfone, polyethersulfone, polytetrafluorethylene, polyether, polypropylene, polyester, and mixed esters.

13-15. (cancelled)